

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EA-11 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

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R 131615Z JUL 73 ZDK

FM USDEL JEC PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 102

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMY

AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, ACOM, XA

SUBJ: SAHEL DROUGHT DISASTER

ROME FOR FODAG

AMBASSADOR IRWIN, RELIEF COORDINATOR WILLIAMS AND AID
DEPUTY AA BROWN MET JULY 13 WITH SECRETARY OF COOPERATION
DENIAU AND HIS DEPUTY CHIEF OF CABINET PUISSANT TO DISCUSS
PROBLEMS OF SAHELIAN RELIEF AND RECOVERY PROGRAMS.

AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED CONCERN OF AMERICAN PEOPLE WITH
THE SUFFERING IN SAHEL AND INTRODUCED WILLIAMS AS PRESIDENT
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NIXON'S SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR U.S. RELIEF AND REHABILITATION.

WILLIAMS STRESSED THAT IN THIS NEW RESPONSIBILITY HE RECOGNIZED FRENCH PREEMINENT INTERESTS AND KNOWLEDGE OF SAHEL AND SOUGHT STRENGTHEN JOINT COOPERATION WITH THEM. DENIAU RESPONDED FAVORABLY AND REVIEWED SITUATION IN EACH OF THE DROUGHT STRICKEN COUNTRIES.

DENIAU CONCLUDED THAT FOOD MOVEMENTS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY SEEMED LARGELY SUFFICIENT FOR IMMEDIATE NEEDS. PRESS REPORTS OF MASS STARVATION ARE NOT TRUE ALTHOUGH THERE ARE UNDENIABLY REMOTE AREAS WHERE FOOD SUPPLIES ARE INADEQUATE AND MALNUTRITION IS OF INCREASING CONCERN. MAJOR PROBLEMS WERE THOSE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DISRUPTION CAUSED BY EXTENDED DROUGHT AND MASSIVE POPULATION MOVEMENTS, DENIAU SAID. WILLIAMS STRESSED NEED FOR ASSESSMENT OF ADDITIONAL FOOD REQUIREMENTS OVER COMING MONTHS. DENIAU BELIEVED AN ADDITIONAL 300,000 FOOD GRAIN WOULD BE NEEDED IN OCTOBER-NOVEMBER. IT WAS AGREED THAT A BETTER ANALYSIS OF FUTURE REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE MADE IN AUGUST WHEN THE CROP PROSPECTS WOULD BE CLEARER. DENIAU SAID THAT THE INTERSTATE COMMITTEE SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN SUCH AN ANALYSIS.

DENIAU INDICATED SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT TRANSPORT PROBLEMS INTO THE AREA. HE CRITICIZED FAO PRESS STATEMENTS ON NEED FOR MASSIVE AIRLIFT AS THOROUGHLY CONFUSING AND NOT SERIOUS. DENIAU INSISTED CONCERN MUST BE PRIMARILY WITH STRENGTHENING GROUND TRANSPORT, WITH AIRLIFT RESERVED FOR SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY NEEDS. HE SAID THEY HAD ALMOST DAILY INFORMATION FROM INDIVIDUAL SAHEL GOVERNMENTS ON TRANSPORT PROBLEMS AND OFFERED TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION REGULARLY WITH US. IN THIS CONNECTION, DENIAU INDICATED THAT PUISSANT WAS FAC COORDINATOR ON FRENCH EMERGENCY RELIEF AID.

FRENCH BELIEVE THAT ON EMERGENCY RELIEF IT WAS ESSENTIAL WORK DIRECTLY WITH INDIVIDUAL SAHEL GOVERNMENT, WHILE FOR REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT SAHEL INTERSTATE COMMITTEE MUST PLAY MAJOR ROLE BECAUSE OF CRITICAL CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED. ONLY AFRICANS CAN MAKE THOSE DECISIONS. WILLIAMS AGREED THAT INTERSTATE COMMITTEE MUST BE IN FOREFRONT, BUT QUESTIONED WHETHER THEY HAD SUFFICIENT TECHNICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAPACITY, GIVEN COMPLEXITY OF PROBLEMS AND NEED RESTRUCTURE SUCH PROJECT PLANS AS HAD BEEN DEVELOPED IN PRE-DROUGHT PERIOD. DENIAU NODDED THAT THEY WOULD NEED CONSIDERABLE HELP, BUT SUGGESTED WE WAIT FOR LATE JULY INTERSTATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND AUGUST CHIEFS OF STATE MEETING WHEN WE COULD SEE MORE CLEARLY WHAT AFRICANS WERE PREPARED TO PUT FORTH. HE HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO DIORI THAT IF DONORS WERE TO RESPOND TO CALL FOR A MARSHALL PLAN FOR THE SAHEL, THIS COULD BE DONE ONLY IF SAHEL

STATES WERE PREPARED A MEANINGFUL PROGRAM.

WILLIAMS SUGGESTED THAT ADDITIONAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH APPEARED IMPORTANT TO GUIDE MAJOR INVESTMENT DECISIONS. DENIAU INITIALLY RESPONDED THAT PLENTY OF STUDIES WERE AVAILABLE. HE NOTED THAT FAC HAD JUST PUBLISHED AN INVENTORY ON ALL FRENCH RESEARCH CONCERNING THE SAHEL AND PROVIDED A COPY TO WILLIAMS. WE RECOGNIZED THAT GREAT AMOUNTS OF IMPORTANT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, PARTICULARLY BY THE FRENCH THEMSELVES. HOWEVER, IT WAS OUR BELIEF THAT THERE WAS NEED FOR NOT ONLY TO REVIEW EXISTING STUDIES BUT TO DETERMINE FROM THEM OPTIONS REGARDING ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, FROM WHICH AFRICAN LEADERSHIP COULD MAKE ITS CHOICES. DENIAU SEEMED TO WARM TO THIS IDEA AND RECOGNIZE THAT IT WOULD PROVIDE A SOUNDER BASIS FOR AFRICAN DECISION MAKING. BROWN RECALLED THAT IT HAD BEEN THIS SORT OF THING WHICH US DELEGATION HAD BEEN SUGGESTING AT GENEVA UN MEETING. US SUGGESTED THAT WHILE AFRICANS SHOULD CERTAINLY APPROVE UNDERTAKING SUCH ANALYSES, THE EFFORT ITSELF COULD PROBABLY BEST BE CARRIED OUT BY THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY. DENIAU ALSO SEEMED INTERESTED BUT LISTENED, WITHOUT COMMENT, TO THE SUGGESTION THAT PERHAPS MORSE'S OFFICE IN UN COULD SERVE AS FOCUS FOR SUCH AN EFFORT.

MEETING ENDED WITH MUTUAL DESIRE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE, CONTINUING CONTACT ON THESE IMPORTANT ISSUES. AMBASSADOR LENT HIS PERSONAL SUPPORT AND DENIAU LOOKED TO PUISSANT TO FOLLOW-UP ON REGULAR EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND WAS WITH EMBASSY STAFF. WILLIAMS

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